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The month of March is now past and with it the 1953 season of the dig at Jericho. It was a most hectic three months, but the results were well worth all the time, labour and expense. . This collaborative effort between the American School of Oriental Research and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem - the latter also representing other institutions such as the University of Sydney, Australia, The Australian Institute of Archaeology, the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford, museums and universities in Leeds, Birmingham, Liverpool, Dublin - has been a great success. Jericho is a most exciting place to work and the personnel drawn from so many different national and professional backgrounds makes for a very profitable camaraderie. A good example of this last was the Boat Race.

Americans may not realize what an important place in the sporting and social life of Britain is held by the annual race on the Thames between the crews of Oxford and Cambridge. As the day - March 17 - approached, the British members of our contingent became more and more excited as to the outcome and finally it was decided to re-enact the race on our own. There were certain difficulties. While we had two bona fide Oxonians in our midst, they did not suffice to make up a crew. And there was not a single Cantabrian amongst us. This was solved in various ways. Some had definite Oxford sympathies, Neil Richardson and Father North had once seen Oxford, Jim Warren had an Oxford grey suit. Cambridge was represented by those who had antipathies for Oxford - including even one whose father had captained an Oxford crew, others who thought that the junior university represented the modern progressive spirit as compared with the traditional and convential of Oxford. The feelings of others were swayed by pure competition into representing Cambridge. As Miss Kenyon is an Oxford graduate, she was the logical person to captain the Oxford team. I, as Assistant Director of the dig, became willy-nilly the captain of the Cambridge crew. As you will see, the honour of Cambridge and the American School was well upheld.

Such a choosing of sides was at first intended merely to provide rival cheering squads for a race of paper boats on one of our many streams. But as the idea of a race gained ground, the possibility of making it a real boat race came to the fore. Our surveyor took charge of arrangements and they were difficult. He located two boats used by fishermen on the Jordan. The Jordan was in flood from heavy rains and its banks were deep in mud so the race could not be held there. Finally we paid to rent the boats and have them brought around to the Dead Sea. We took our dinner with us and departed on the big day, only to find that the boats had been impounded by the army because it was forbidden to use boats on the Dead Sea. Frantic calls to higher-ups resulted, but they proved unnecessary when a local corporal discovered that all we wanted to do was to race along parallel to the beach and were not intending to row southwards into dangerous waters. The boats themselves turned out to be more like scows than sculls. They were extremely heavy, flat-bottomed and square-sterned. The bows were bluff and in one case consisted of a flattened gasoline tin. One was a yard shorter than the other so we had to toss for boats. There was one set of oars for each boat but the rowlocks were so built that we could not be sure whether we were supposed to row

facing forward or aft. The oars were not the same length, and had the added distinction of being wider at the inboard end than in the blade. It seemed very unlikely that the boats could be propelled satisfactorily with them so each crew was provided with two little steel coal shovels, tied by a string around the neck of the paddler, and two boards as added propellants. As our crews were much too large for the capacity of the boats it was decided to make the race a relay. Surveying poles were set up along the beach at 60 meter intervals, and the crews were divided into three parts. The first crew rowed the first lap, came to shore and exchanged with the second crew and so forth. By the time all arrangements were made and army clearance obtained, it was quite dark, but the race was run off anyway. The results have been written up by Miss Kenyon, a staunch Oxford supporter and crewman, but as this account is intended to appear in "Isis", the Oxford university paper, and is entitled "The Lowest Boat Race in History" (with reference to the fact that it was held on the Dead Sea and with no implications, at least in the title, to the character of the race) it is definitely biased. As a matter of fact Cambridge won and Oxford did not even finish two laps. In the above-mentioned article, the cause is said to have been a broken rowlock, the result of Cambridge sabotage. The broken rowlock is a fact. Cambridge claims that its occurrence was due to poor maintenance, only to be expected of a university which specializes in the humanities. In any case, the race was a great success, but this was not the end. While dinner was being eaten and celebrations were being held it was suddenly noted that one boat was missing. A frantic search was instituted and the missing craft was discovered near the mouth of the Jordan to which the wind had carried it. It was taken in tow by the other boat, but was cut adrift when it was seen to be sinking in spite of the valiant efforts of a skeleton crew who were busily baling with what equipment was available - in this case only cocktail glasses. It was finally brought safely to shore and beached. The Great Boat Race enhanced the reputation for lunacy which archaeologists have in many places, and added nothing to the knowledge of navigation or boatmanship. But it was one of those occasions which all of us will look back to with relish.

This episode will convey to our readers an impression of the good fun which was shared by all of us in our work at Jericho. But of course the main results of Jericho were scientific. In my January letter, I was able to tell you some of the sensational results of our tomb work and the main lines of our work on the tell. Since that time, Professor Kraeling in his February newsletter has added to the story. It remains for me therefore to give only a resume of what happened in the last month and to indicate in what way this added to our knowledge of the history of Jericho and the wider development of man's history in the Near East.

In the large Trench I, excavation continued downwards until it reached rock at both ends, although in the middle under the second of the Middle Bronze Age revetments rock has still not been found. All of the Early Bronze Age city walls were cut through at the upper end of the trench. Immediately below came pottery-bearing levels of Neolithic and below these again, the pre-pottery levels. Great interest was aroused when it was discovered that there were pre-pottery Neolithic levels preceding the great stone Neolithic wall found last year and overlain by it. The houses of this new level to the extent that they have been revealed, are of a rather strange construction. They are of the same excellent mud-brick used in the later levels, but the walls are not straight. We have three curved walls which do not make up one round house as might be expected but seem to indicate some sort of building with walls which can only be described as "scalloped". It is too early to hazard guesses as to the further lines of extension of these walls, but whatever they may be, we certainly seem to have discovered a type of architecture hitherto unknown in Jericho Neolithic.

The stone Neolithic wall, discovered last year has now been traced further towards the north. After a rather unexpected turn inwards which gave us an uneasy feeling that it might not circumvallate the Neolithic settlement as we know it, and therefore

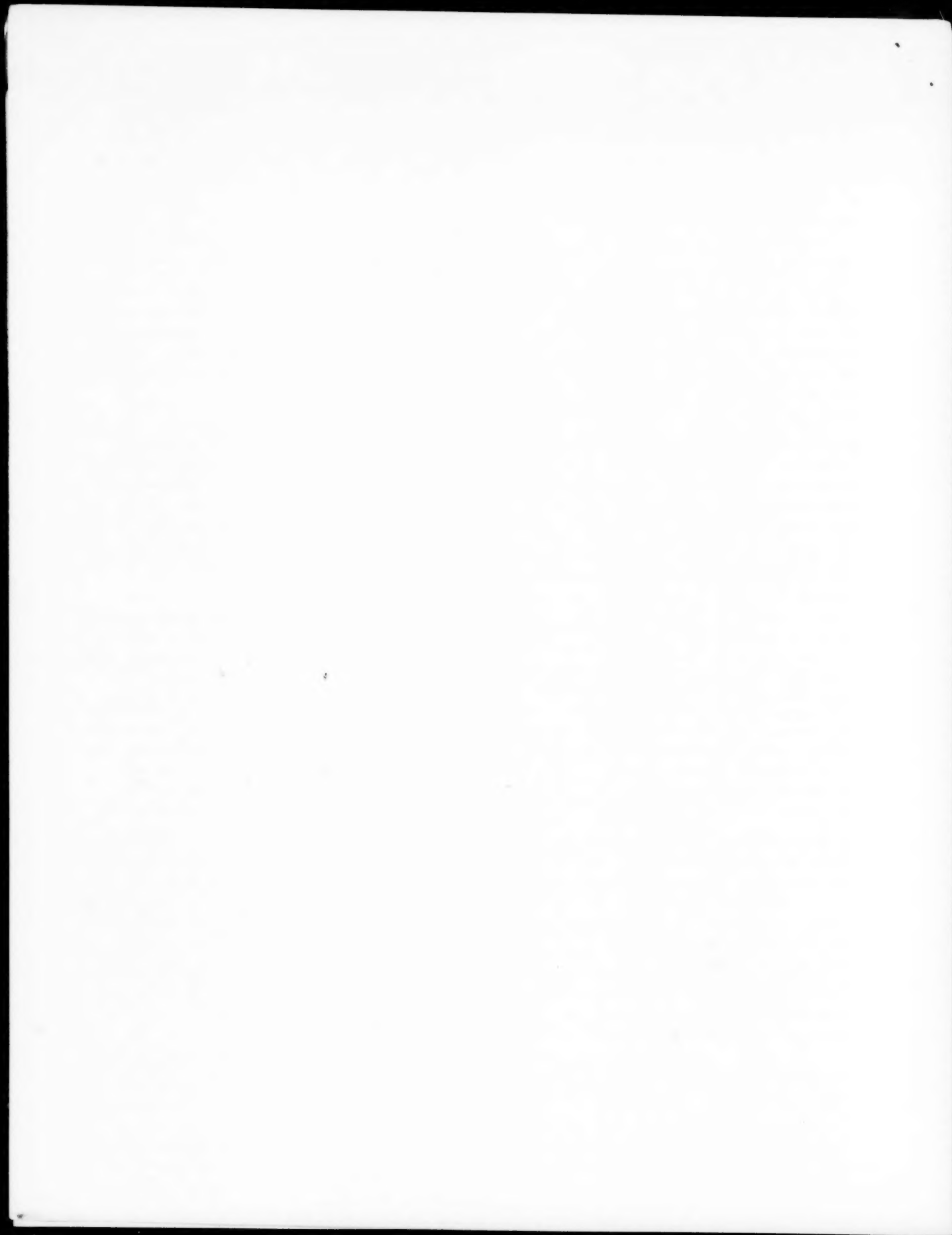
showing human habitation. It is still too early to say more than that the evidence at hand would fit well the theory that we are in a Mesolithic horizon. No flints of Neolithic type were found and a few microliths appeared. But the area of the sounding was too small to serve as a basis for any more far-reaching conclusions. Unfortunately more light on this very early period of man's occupation of the site of Jericho must await the clearance of a larger area next year. My own personal regret is that I shall not be there to do it.

The area adjoining Professor Garstang's Middle Bronze storerooms was found to agree very well with his findings. A narrow cobbled street with steps - very similar to many streets in the old towns and cities of the Near East today - was found, and off it opened doorways, in some cases reached by steps, leading into shops, houses or stores. In one room was found a store of wheat, badly charred by the fire which destroyed this latest of Middle Bronze cities, contained in ten large storage jars. Mr. Warren carefully removed the grain and it amounted to several bushels. This was far too much for our needs and so a few pennies were added to the excavation's coffers by selling small bags of grain to interested visitors.

Work in the tombs continued throughout February and March and the excellent results attained in the early weeks of the excavation were matched and even bettered as time went on. More tombs containing fine wooden objects, meat, textiles, basketry etc. were discovered. Miss Diana Kirkbride who has been in charge of exploration and the clearance of these fine tombs has acquired such a reputation that it is not to be wondered at that I have asked her to accompany us to Dhiban to see what luck she will have there. Our searches for tombs there over the last two years have not met with too great success, and we are all hoping that Diana will "turn the trick" for us.

Earlier in the letter I mentioned the bad weather we have had and are still having in Jericho, not to speak of Jerusalem and Amman. Last year we had a great deal of rain but it came when it was supposed to come, mainly in December and January. This year the rains held off and people were very pessimistic about the prospects for the crops. Then when all hope seemed to be at an end the rains came, and came, and came. For the last month we have had rain almost every day. It has been very cold, even in Jericho, and in Jerusalem it has been downright miserable, with snow, sleet, etc. Anyone who may doubt this description can ask Professor Kraeling. His plans for photography in this part of the Near East were completely thrown off schedule by the weather we provided for him. And the dig at Jericho suffered. Heavy rains flooded the tell constantly. On three separate occasions, the great Neolithic trench at the north end of the tell was flooded. Once it took ten men a whole day to bale it out. And when the water was gone there was a good foot of silt and sticky clay to remove. In addition, the sides of the squares caved in, walls were washed away, and the whole area became one filthy, unphotogenic mess. The big German trench which we were clearing was also flooded and so badly that work in the bottom had to be suspended for the rest of the season. The continuous rains have hampered all recording and preservation work. Plans and sections became sodden masses of pulpy paper while we were actually working on them and so spattered with mud and clay that the pencil lines were hardly distinguishable. Photography had no sunny skies to help it and the dust storms which frequently alternated with the rain storms added to the difficulty of keeping lenses dry and clean.

In the early stages of the rains, Miss Kenyon pointed out that such conditions were typical of English archaeology and one got used to them. But even her temper became somewhat frayed after weeks of this same interminable rain, and she was forced to confess that in England one could at least predict with some degree of confidence when it was going to rain and when it wasn't. The rains continued even through the packing up operations. Wood "excelsior" and dried banana leaves, used for packing, became sodden as one put it into the cases. Tents were taken down and were soaked,





before they could be stowed away in a dry place. In such conditions, the removal of the skulls referred to above was not a pleasant occupation, carried out as it was with dirty water trickling down the neck. After two years of excavation at Jericho I am willing to gainsay those who cheerfully say that it rarely rains in the Jordan Valley.

The floods did elicit a rather humorous remark from a visiting tourist. He could not understand why the early Neolithic people should choose to build their houses in such a ravine- pointing to the steep sides of the trench - where they would suffer so much from such floods, when they could have built on the heights above. At this stage, after we had already pointed out how the city had grown upwards from an almost flat plain to its present height, it seemed useless to emphasize the fact that when the "Neolith" built their houses they were not in a hole and that what the visitor saw as a ravine was actually the result of our modern excavations cutting down through many layers of occupation covering a period of some three thousand years. But now the Jericho excavations are virtually at an end for this year. We can all look forward to new and startling results next year and the seasons to follow that. Miss Kenyon was afraid that her formal lectures to the citizenry of Amman and Jerusalem last week on the results of this year's work might appear as an anticlimax after last year's report. But even without the skull discovery which came too late to be included in the lecture, the results were obviously important and interesting and were greeted by the archaeologists and laity of Jerusalem and Amman with excitement and interest. Perhaps a good indication of the recognition of the importance of the Jericho work can be gauged from the number of tourists at the tell. They came in droves from Cabinet ministers to school children, from UN and consular people to refugees and Jericho citizens, all fascinated by the thousands of years of history we are adding to the famous old city and with it to the history of the Near East and the world.

But in the recounting of the excitement of Jericho I do not want to forget some of the happenings on the home front. Those of you who know the School and its staff will be interested to hear that Omar, our major-domo and head cook is taking to himself a wife. His formal engagement was celebrated a few weeks ago in Bethany at the home of the girl's parents. American School and Jericho excavation personnel turned out en masse to attend the ceremony, to eat the food prepared for us and to meet the lucky girl. The date of the actual wedding is still not announced, but we all wish Omar our heartiest congratulations and best wishes. We have added a new woman to our staff. Milic, whom many of you remember, has left us and in her place we have Wadiha, a woman who speaks excellent English and is working out very well as the person in charge of the dormitory.

I personally can report the pleasure of seeing some more members of my family. My father, mother and sister are now staying with us in Jerusalem over the Easter season. As I have not seen them for nearly two and a half years it is good to have them here, although I cannot say that I am seeing a great deal more of them now. Mrs. McMulty is still with us. The Fishers, the Wolfes and Mr. Andry are back from Iraq. I should report here that Mr. James Warren has been appointed a Fellow of the School. In him and Neil Richardson, the other Fellow, I have two extremely capable, helpful and personable assistants. I don't know what I would do without them. Both of them richly deserve the honour which the School has conferred upon them. By now we are in the process of building up to Easter. Our dormitory is full and we have an overflow in several directions. But I shall leave the account of Easter and our School activities in connection with it until the next letter.

All our American School people joined the École Biblique in mourning the passing of Père Félix-Marie Abel about two weeks ago. His reputation as geographer and historian had made him a leading figure on the faculty of the Dominican School here. The last time I saw him alive was on the occasion of a visit he made with his confreres to the Jericho dig. He was very spry and interested as always. His death came very suddenly and was a shock to us all.

May I close this long report by wishing you all a most joyous Easter season from the Jerusalem staff and student body.

A.D. Tushingham, Director.